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September 12, 1975

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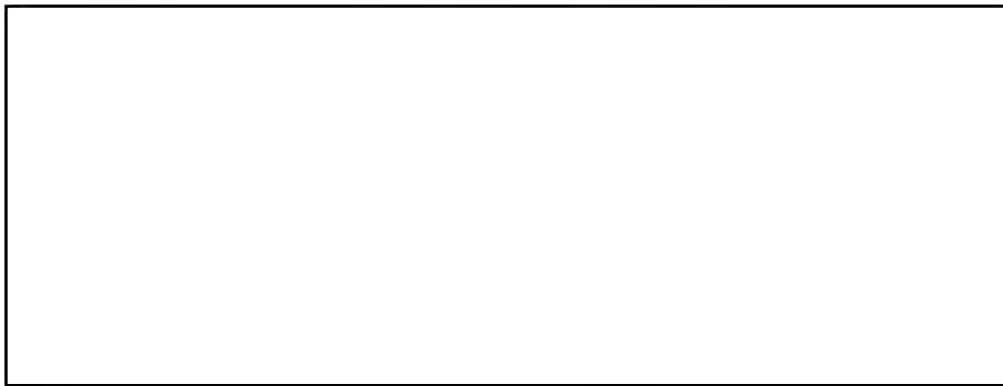
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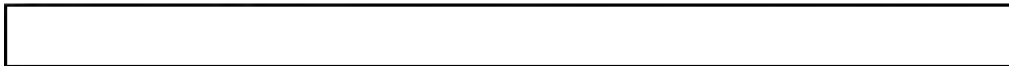
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LEBANON

Lebanese army units moved into position between Tripoli and Zagharta early yesterday, effectively ending civil unrest in northern Lebanon. A few leftist and Muslim politicians in Tripoli have criticized the cabinet's decision to bring in the army, but the majority of Muslims and Christians in the area appear to have welcomed it.

The country's main Muslim political leaders, who reside in Beirut and ordinarily oppose any use of the army for internal security purposes, have so far withheld comment. This is partly out of deference to Karami, who heads one important Sunni Muslim faction, but it also reflects their admiration for the concessions he has been able to wring from Lebanon's conservative Christian leaders.

The cabinet yesterday approved a bill reorganizing the army to establish the "command council" proposed by Karami in a policy speech last month. Although no details have been made public, the council presumably would include representatives of Lebanon's major religious sects and have the final word on such matters as army deployments and promotions. Loss of these prerogatives would significantly reduce the power of the army commander, who by custom is always a Maronite Christian.

Christian groups in parliament have in the past strongly opposed proposals to reorganize the army. Karami's position has been strengthened considerably by his handling of the current crisis, however, and his proposals may now win greater backing from centrist Christian politicians hoping to avoid another round of violence.

In return for their support for the government, Muslim leaders apparently are demanding also that the Christians responsible for the killing of 12 Muslims on the Tripoli-Beirut highway last Sunday be turned over to authorities. Christian leaders so far have refused to meet this demand.

Leftist leaders who follow Kamal Jumblatt, head of the Progressive Socialist Party, met yesterday and reportedly will assemble again today to consider their reaction to the government move. They have promised a formal policy statement, which probably will be critical but will fall short of advocating armed resistance.

Zuhayr Muhsin, head of the Syrian-controlled Saiqa fedayeen group and the Palestine Liberation Organization military department, announced yesterday that the Palestinians have no objection to the government's use of the army. The decision to do so, he said, is a "purely domestic question."

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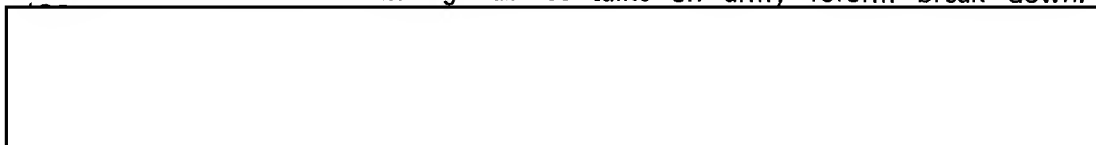
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Lebanese and Palestinian radicals backed by Iraq have called for a general strike on Monday to protest deployment of the army. Their call is not likely to be heeded, however, unless the continuing cabinet talks on army reform break down.

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PORTUGAL

Portuguese President Costa Gomes and the next prime minister, Admiral Azevedo, are trying to overcome the latest obstacle to forming a new government: the Communist refusal to cooperate.

The military leaders, reportedly including Major Melo Antunes, have continued negotiations with representatives of the Socialist, Communist, and Popular Democratic parties toward forming a "national unity" government. They want to avoid a formal coalition agreement but to attract enough support and participation from civilians to give the new government a chance of dealing effectively with Portugal's growing economic and social problems. Their task has been greatly complicated, however, since the Communists launched a harsh propaganda campaign against the center-left Popular Democrats. The Communists' campaign appears to be a stalling tactic designed to get them better terms for joining the government.

Socialist leader Mario Soares has reportedly been asked to help overcome the differences between the Communists and the Popular Democrats.

A Popular Democratic Party source told a US embassy official yesterday that Azevedo, Costa Gomes, and the Antunes faction had agreed to the conditions of his party and the Socialists for joining the government. Military leaders met twice yesterday with the Communists and the Socialists; the Communists apparently were putting up stiff resistance to the conditions of the other two parties. The Popular Democratic source said, however, that he thought that the Communists would eventually agree to enter the government.

Costa Gomes also presided over a meeting of the Revolutionary Council yesterday, presumably to discuss the new government, efforts by pro-Communists to stir up trouble in the military, and the unfavorable reaction to the decree law it passed on Monday restricting publication of the military's political views.

Not only have the press, radio, and television criticized the decree law as an abridgement of press freedom, but some in the media have even disobeyed it. A meeting called by journalists to fight the new law was held yesterday at the leftist independent daily *A Capital*.

On the island of Madeira, meanwhile, a serious threat to Lisbon's authority appears to be gathering steam. On Wednesday, the independence movement there threatened to expel from the island anyone opposed to independence unless they declared their support by midnight, September 17. The list of expellees includes the chief of staff of the Portuguese forces in Madeira, all continental officers stationed there, and all Communist Party members.

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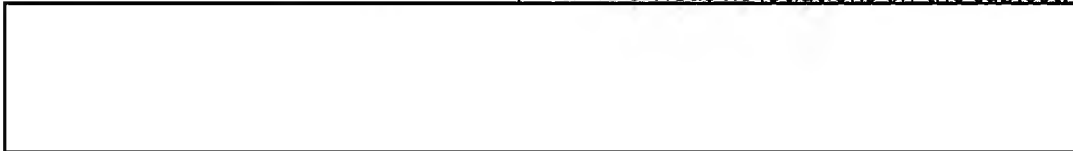
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USSR-UN

Moscow has announced that its annual showcase disarmament proposal for the United Nations General Assembly this year will take the form of a draft treaty banning all testing of nuclear weapons. One key purpose of the exercise is to embarrass the Chinese.

As with previous Soviet proposals, Moscow avoids making any significant concessions. All nuclear weapons tests would be banned, and verification of compliance would be by "national technical means" rather than by an international body. Exempted from the ban would be "peaceful" underground nuclear explosions. States without nuclear weapons could conduct "peaceful" explosions as provided in the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, while nuclear weapons states would negotiate a new accord to cover their activities. The treaty would not come into effect until all nuclear weapons states, including China and France, had agreed. Furthermore, it would have no time limit; any signatory would be able to withdraw if it felt the treaty conflicted with its "higher interests."

Moscow obviously is following the same propaganda route it took with proposals for a World Disarmament Conference (1971), a permanent ban on the use of nuclear weapons (1972), a reduction of military budgets (1973), and bans on environmental modification (1974). Its lack of consultation with the other nuclear states before announcing its latest proposal and the foreordained opposition of China and France show that Moscow expects no serious negotiations on the subject.



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PANAMA

The details of agreements in principle reached thus far by the Panama Canal negotiators have been made public by a radical student group. Their release could embarrass the Panamanian government and possibly jeopardize the talks.

A leftist student group gave the secret Foreign Ministry text of the agreements to the Law Faculty of the University of Panama, various news agencies including Cuba's Prensa Latina, and to an opposition broadcast station. Using the document as its source, the station called on the government to denounce the accords, characterizing the agreements as extremely favorable to the US and implying a Panamanian "sellout."

The details released include a provision that could be used to give the US a role in canal defense following the expiration date of the new treaty. This sensitive clause could provoke a highly negative reaction on the part of Panamanian nationalists. Government authentication of the prematurely disclosed accords would also draw attacks on the administration from other students, as well as conservative opponents of national leader General Torrijos, at a time when the Panamanian negotiating team is not prepared to defend the compromises.

The student group and the opposition radio claim that the government withheld details during earlier briefings of the students on the status of negotiations and that Torrijos is not complying with his recent promise to be candid with the public.

So far, the government is denying the authenticity of the released document. The release of the accords and the government's denial of their authenticity will complicate government efforts to publish the official text, however, when treaty talks conclude and the ratification process gets under way.

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CHILE

In a ceremony yesterday marking the second anniversary of the military take-over, President Augusto Pinochet declared that his government would partially ease the state of siege, but he reaffirmed its intention to restrict individual rights. Most of the speech was devoted to reiterating the regime's moral righteousness, its fierce opposition to Marxism, and its determination to stick with a hard line.

No new departures were announced in economic or foreign affairs. The only noteworthy innovation was a proposal to create a "council of state" composed of former presidents and other prominent citizens to advise the junta on major questions. While this would seem to open the door to cooperation with key politicians such as former president Eduardo Frei, leader of the large Christian Democratic Party, the odds are against the move toward a meaningful dialogue. Frei

is probably hoping that economic difficulties will force the government to abandon its extremely conservative advisers and perhaps alter the junta leadership.

The President's strong distrust of political parties and his indirect criticism of them in his speech seem to show that there has not been any real shift in the government's authoritarian attitude or in its tendency to equate all opposition with subversion. Actually, the proposal is more likely to be a public relations gambit than a forthright step toward greater political tolerance.

Pinochet's decision to reduce the state of siege may also be a largely empty gesture. The decision will allow some review authority by civil courts, but there will probably be little substantive impact unless the government chooses to abide by decrees more closely than it has in the past. There has been a repeated tendency to look the other way while the security forces ignore the letter as well as the spirit of the law. There was no new word on the release of prisoners.

For the most part, the President dwelled on his now standard theme that Chile stands virtually alone in its campaign against monolithic world communism. The US embassy observed that his generally lackluster statements found a less enthusiastic reception than last year. The relatively minor modifications he proposed will not go far toward satisfying Chileans who had hoped for greater political liberalization and a more humanistic economic policy. Nor will they do much to bolster Chile's international image.

Although Pinochet said the internal unity of the junta was "like granite," we believe that General Leigh, the air force member of the junta, is unlikely to be satisfied with the President's hard-line stance. More friction over policymaking seems inevitable.

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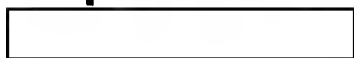
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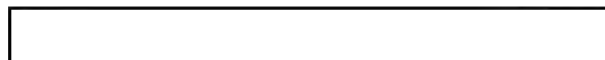
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